Pamphlet 301 (10c. postpaid) May, 1920

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CHILDREN'S CODES

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I

A children's code is not a code. That is, it is not a code in the ordinary meaning of the term—in the sense of a systematic compilation of laws. A code is a labor-saving device. Through the action of a legislative body at successive sessions in enacting new measures and in amending and repealing old ones, the general statutes soon get into such confusion that reference to them becomes a weary task and steps have to be taken to straighten out the tangle. So all the laws in force at the time are assembled, arranged according to subject matter, and the sections numbered consecutively, the compilation becoming known for instance as the "Code of 1915," or sometimes taking the name of the man chiefly responsible for it. This is a code, as commonly understood, but a children's code, so-called, bears but slight resemblance to it.

The purpose of a children's code is to standardise and to co-ordinate the laws and administrative agencies relating to children and to supply laws and administrative agencies covering aspects of child welfare that have been neglected in the statutes. This, of course, is far more than a mere process of simplification—far more than rearrangement for ready reference. A general code deals with laws already passed, while a children's code deals with boys and girls, their interests, and the conditions that affect them. The one is merely the arrangement of laws in orderly sequence so as to facilitate the use of the statute books; the other is legislative social service whose object is to enrich and to make secure the realm of childhood.

Structurally also, a children's code is unlike a general code, for it does not attempt to codify the laws concerning children but

leaves them where it finds them, scattered among the general acts as determined by their content. Indeed, it would only add to the confusion and administrative difficulties if they were taken from their places and brought together as a code, for in considering any subject involving both adults and children we should then be under the troublesome necessity of looking up in the children's code the law pertaining to children and then turning to the general code for the provisions affecting their elders. So a children's code leaves in the body of general health laws the provisions relating to the health of children, in the general labor laws the provisions as to the labor of children, and so with all other provisions that are properly part of larger groups of acts—they are left where they belong and no attempt is made to codify them.

The word "code" in this connection is really a misnomer, and the only justification for its use is that it is short. To supply, to standardise and to co-ordinate laws and agencies for child welfare is the aim of a children's code but this aim is not even suggested by its misleading name, although perhaps it would be hard to find a more fitting title having also the advantage of brevity. However, as the term comes into general use and understanding it will serve as well as another, but instances have already occurred in which efforts to promote the children's code idea have been vigorously opposed by persons who took the word at its face value and held that a separate codification of the laws concerning children would hopelessly entangle the administrative machinery of a state.

II

Just as a general code must be compiled at intervals as the condition of the statutes may require, so must a children's code be from time to time renewed. It is not a final achievement but a step in the evolution of child welfare standards, a clearing of the way for further progress, and must never, under any circumstances, be looked upon as the end of the line. It is an instrument for advancing the interests of children, just as every effort and every instrumentality made use of in their behalf is for the purpose of pushing forward, part and parcel of a continuing process, for without growth, constant and ever-expanding, there can be no such thing as child welfare. A children's code must be thought of as a

living and growing creature, capable of endless development. But it must never be forgotten that it is a creature whose growth and development are derived from us alone—it is our child for a time and ours is the responsibility for rearing it well and handing it on to those who come after us stronger and better for having been in our care.

A final code would be a disaster, but fortunately it is an impossibility. In the natural course of events it must yield to changes and adjustments. Conditions and ideals determine its character and conditions and ideals are not stable things. Even the laws themselves are open to different constructions—as witness our written constitutions—and although they are supposed to be rigid, they are really quite flexible and can be bent to strangely variant ends. Local sentiment helps to determine their meaning but local officers charged with their enforcement are their leading interpreters. The shades of meaning they read into them as they fulfill, each according to his understanding, their duties of administration, are manifold and bewildering to the student of government. As one goes from place to place in a state observing the work of local officers, he passes through all degrees of administrative ardor from sublime indifference to excessive zeal and finds as many interpretations of any one act as there are officers to enforce it. Local enforcement is not a success in our complex modern life, however well it may have served in the days of a simpler past, and so we find the tendency now is to transfer administrative powers from the local community to the larger unit—the county, the state, the nation. It appears that efficiency in administration, at least so far as the criminal law is concerned, increases with the distance between the administrative agency and the community affected. A county sheriff is more effective than a town constable, and a United States marshal is more respected than either. There is need for uniformity of enforcement no less than for uniformity of law, and a children's code can promote both. For a children's code necessarily takes a broad view of conditions and operates on a statewide scale. But while it seeks to equalize opportunities for children by making toward uniformity in conditions and administrative methods, it must at the same time stimulate and encourage experimental work by both public and private agencies, for it is only by means of fresh enterprises and trials of new methods that our systems of law

and administrative effort can be kept adequate under the ever-changing conditions of our life.

The body of laws we have slowly built up for the benefit of children is a rambling structure, some of whose parts are falling into decay and should be torn down, while the other parts have been put up so independently of one another, without the aid of any general plan, that they show little or no relationship among themselves and those who dwell in one part have access to the other parts only through the most roundabout passageways and devious stairs. The health laws have been passed mainly through the activity of individuals and societies interested primarily in health and having little or no concern with other undertakings in behalf of children. Similarly, labor laws, school laws, and other welfare measures have been separately enacted, and hence legislative measures to promote the well-being of boys and girls, as well as of society in general, are of more or less haphazard growth. They are commonly the result of spasmodic and unrelated efforts on the part sometimes of official and sometimes of private persons and agencies, put forth at different times as the occasion seemed to require. A society interested in juvenile delinquency draws a bill for a juvenile court and the probation system and has it introduced into the legislature; at another session a measure that deals with orphanhood is urged upon the lawmakers by some other organisation; later on, a compulsory school attendance law is proposed by another agency; and at some other time, amendments to the child labor law are thrust forward from still another source. Successively these and other matters are brought up for consideration in legislative assemblies at the instance of their supporters each one of whom has an eye single to the need of the particular reform he advocates, and none of whom, as a rule, understands or gives thought to the bearing which his proposal may have upon other measures of a related character. The legislature is impressed by the special need and the flow of argument, and writes the new provisions upon the statute books. So it is that in this way the body of laws safeguarding boys and girls and securing what we deem their best interests, has been gradually framed, here a little and there a little, with the separate contributions of public and private individuals and organisations each interested at the time in only one phase of the general problem. Inevitably the structure

is of curious form and inevitably it shocks one's sense of proportion. There is no harmony, no co-ordination; its parts do not articulate properly or perform their functions smoothly, and the effectiveness of such laws in operation as a general program is correspondingly reduced. Frequently, laws that are closely related in purpose are contradictory in their provisions and the attempt to administer them jointly only creates confusion, as, for example, in a case where the school law requires a child to attend school until 16 years of age, but the mothers' pension law provides no allowance for a child over 14 years of age—what is a poor mother to do while her child is between 14 and 16? Obviously unless relief is afforded from private sources, the school law will be broken. In such an instance it is the part of a children's code to remove these discrepancies and to harmonise the conflicting provisions with the welfare of the child in mind.

As a natural consequence of this process of accretion in child welfare lawmaking the administrative agencies set up to put the laws into effect do their work without much contact among themselves and without much regard to the inter-relations among the several parts of the administrative machinery. Each is intent upon its own task and takes at best only an academic interest in the work of the others. After years of such single-minded effort in lawmaking and administration it is found necessary to reassemble the parts of the child welfare machinery and to fit them together so that as it becomes increasingly important and elaborate, it shall operate more smoothly and effectively.

In this respect the state is somewhat like a merchant who must take stock from time to time, going over the goods he has on hand to see what is shopworn and what is out of style, what fails to meet the changed conditions of his business, and what needs to be supplied in order to meet the requirements of his customers. For the state must take stock at intervals, just as the merchant does. Some of its laws get shopworn through obsolescence and rusty and dusty through disuse, others no longer answer their purpose because of changes in conditions, and sometimes situations arise for which there is no law whatever. More modern machinery must be installed, new methods adopted, and a better system introduced into this vast business of caring for boys and girls. For our chief object in life is to bring up our boys and girls to be strong men and women.

III

It should be understood at the outset that a children's code is comprehensive, that it is not devoted to the interests of any one class of children, and that the normal child—the ordinary every-day, wholesome boy or girl—is its beneficiary just as is the abnormal or subnormal child who is in need of special care. The real children's code is democratic—it recognises no class distinctions.

The popular concept of child welfare is distorted, vague and surprisingly narrow. Indeed, even among social workers themselves the term is not always given the wide meaning it would seem so clearly to convey. Our ideas of things are often cramped and subject to the malady of reversion to type. We are in the habit of fashioning them upon well-defined models—of conventionalising them, so to speak. Mention a convict and we think of a close-cropped, cow-licked, stripe-clad wretch; although stripes on a convict are archaic, we cherish such insignia in the face of modern penology. So it is with the prize-fighter, the preacher, the farmer, the butcher, the baker, and the candle-stick maker—each is reduced to a type and fitted in our fancy to a symbol which we label as the true representative of its class and file away in our memory for ready reference. It is amusing to see how faithfully the stage and the motion picture worship these symbols, searching the far corners of the Earth for the prescribed type to act each part and never daring, in their choice of characters, to run counter to the public prejudice. These types and symbols were shaped out of bygone conditions and carry with them the quaintness and flavor of old-time customs, but it makes no difference that none of those conditions and customs persist in our day—the pictures in our mind are inalterably fixed. Even our speech is still, to a marked extent, couched in terms of the long ago: a steamship "sails" from a port; one "drives" his automobile and "writes" a letter on his typewriter.

When child welfare is spoken of, one thinks of a poor, little, ragged, sobbing child whose mother is dead and whose drunken father is aiming a blow at him with one hand and clutching a bottle of rum in the other, while the angelic heroine from the charity society stands between them with upraised arm and shields the helpless child. We insist upon the drunkenness and the bottle, prohibition

or no prohibition, and the contents must be rum, not whisky or brandy or hard cider, but rum—genuine, fiery rum. This habit of crowding classes of people, conditions of life, and kinds of work into the narrow limits of these conventionalised images interferes in no small degree with our understanding of new developments and our catching the full significance of what is going on about us. It is unfortunate that child welfare work is commonly thought of only as the protecting from cruelty, the rescuing from iniquity, and the relieving of poverty—action to provide for immediate needs—while the less spectacular but more far-reaching service in safeguarding health, insuring play, supplying schools, and controlling labor is generally looked upon as independent of "child welfare work" and, indeed, as so many unrelated undertakings. Division of labor has affected social service just as it has affected manufacturing—the field has been split up and specialties have been more or less highly developed; but, curiously enough, the term child welfare has come to have in the popular mind and even in certain quarters of the social service world, a meaning restricted to the care of the dependent, the protection of the neglected, the correction of the delinquent, and the training of the defective—subjects which are most conspicuous in the programs of our conferences on social work. The social aspects of education, health, recreation and employment have a place in most of these programs, it is true, but it is a place of minor importance. The workers in all these fields come too seldom into contact with one another either at convention, or in the course of their work and hence there is not on their part a clear understanding of the relationship among their several efforts and aims and they do not get together for concerted action on a broad plan for the general good. In all this work, and it is exceedingly complicated work, requiring skilful handling and unremitting care and patience, the needs of the normal child are entitled to just as much consideration as the needs of those who are stricken in body, mind or estate. Health, education, recreation and employment concern all children, and moreover, most boys and girls are not dependent, or destitute, or neglected, or abused, or delinquent, or defective, but are normal in respect of their home life, their mental and physical state, and their relations to society. It follows that these four essentials to wholesome growth,—health, play, schools and suitable work—necessary as they are to all classes of children, the fortunate

as well as the unfortunate, are of paramount importance. But they can not be secured to children by their parents alone; the state and the local community are chiefly responsible in the matter through the laws enacted and the steps taken for promoting them. So it is that the normal child has his place in any general welfare program along with those who suffer by reason of want, abuse, broken homes or bad environment.

The normal child who lives in a town where the local authorities fail to take proper precaution to protect health, where schools are neglected, and there is no local pride in keeping abreast of other places in public improvements and all that goes to make life safer and pleasanter, is denied the advantages commonly afforded to delinquent boys and girls in reformatories and to the feeble-minded in the special institutions established for their care. It used to be said that the only way a youth could get vocational training was to commit a crime and be sentenced to the reformatory—the only place where it was provided. Happily, this is no longer a well-founded charge against the public schools, but it is still true that, in proportion to their numbers, far more thought and effort are devoted to the interests of our handicapped children than to those of our normal boys and girls. And yet it is the latter who are to carry on, and in fairness to these, the great majority of our children, who, while enjoying the blessings of home life, are nevertheless subject to public provisions in vital matters that lie beyond the control of their parents, the social worker must keep the balance true.

IV

The children's code idea has taken form out of the experience of those who, in various ways, have served the public interest. Its growth has been gradual, of course, but it is only within recent years that any definite attempt has been made to apply the idea in a practical way. It has been made up of two parts: first, the formulation of acceptable standards and of the principles upon which these standards rest; and second, the embodiment of these standards into law with such modifications as special circumstances might require. The first part serves to clear the air, to point the way, to set up a mark toward which to work, and to show why we should strive to reach it. The second part serves to record our progress,

to secure to us the enjoyment of our gains as they are won, and to furnish the means by which our theories may be tested.

One of the striking instances of our attempt to set forth the principles underlying social work and to rear up standards on those principles, occurred in 1909 when, upon the invitation of President Roosevelt, a meeting of representative social workers, since known as the White House Conference, was held in Washington to agree upon the principles governing the care of dependent children. The statement formulated on this occasion was admirably suited to its purpose and has been of great use throughout the country wherever the treatment of child dependency has been undertaken.

Another instance was the agitation in favor of the general recognition of definite standards concerning the employment of children in gainful occupations. This agitation had been vigorously carried on by national societies and culminated in 1911 with the approval by the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws of a standard child labor law prepared and submitted upon request by the National Child Labor Committee. This measure was recommended by these Commissioners to the several states for enactment into law so as to promote uniformity of legislative action in this field, and it has been adopted since then, in part at least, by most of our commonwealths, while some of its provisions have been written into the law of the nation.

Again, a standard juvenile court law was drawn by Mr. Bernard Flexner who also collaborated in preparing and publishing a statement of the principles and purposes of the juvenile court and the probation system, for the guidance of communities contemplating the improvement of their methods and procedure in dealing with juvenile delinquents.

At the National Conference of Charities and Correction in Baltimore in 1915, so much interest was shown in the proposal for the prompt improvement and correlation of child welfare laws that an organisation was formed to direct the movement throughout the country and was styled the National Committee for Standardising Children's Laws. Mr. C. C. Carstens of Boston was chosen for its chairman.

As a fitting climax to the work of the Children's Year conducted by the Federal Children's Bureau, whose purpose was, in the words of Miss Julia Lathrop, "to put through a child welfare program

for the second year of America's participation in the great war," and as a synthesis of the accumulated experience in child welfare work, there were drawn up at a conference in Washington in 1919, a set of tentative standards in an effort to realise the expressed hope that there might be agreement upon "certain irreducible minimum standards for the health, education, and work of the American child." It is interesting that this gathering occurred just a decade after the White House Conference and in the same city, and that it embraced virtually all branches of child welfare work, whereas the earlier conference considered only the treatment of child dependency. And, too, the Washington conference of 1909 was national while that of 1919 was international, inasmuch as guests from several foreign countries were present upon invitation of our government and their contributions were the leading feature of the discussions. Here we have a vivid illustration of the spread of the child welfare appeal and a formal acknowledgment of its universality. The organisation of the Pan-American Child Welfare Congress by Latin-American social workers in 1916, to serve as a common meeting-ground and forum for child welfare workers from all American countries, is further proof of this broad community of interest in all that relates to the well-being of children.

A few years ago this first part of the children's code movement centered itself in agitation for what was called at the time a children's charter. This was, in a way, an effort to co-ordinate and use to their fullest extent the various manifestations of good-will toward children that existed in American society, although it had also for one of its purposes, as its name implied, a statement of the rights of children—a formulating of the principles that lay at the bottom of all these manifestations. So this proposed charter had in it something of the nature of each of the two parts of the children's code movement, but was primarily a seeking after bases of action—a search for light to guide the work aright. It was hoped to get clearly in mind just what were the rights of childhood and then to advance from their expression to the logical arrangement of legislative proposals securing these rights which might serve as a handbook of standards for general use. The charter was discussed at meetings of the National Conference on Charities and Correction and of the National Child Labor Committee, but was never drawn up. The report of the Children's Bureau Conference in Washington

last year, called "Standards of Child Welfare," may properly be regarded, however, as this charter of childhood, for it was an outgrowth of this earlier effort and is well adapted to serve the ends of the former plan.

V

The writing of standards into the law is the more palpable part of the children's code movement and is, as a matter of fact, usually regarded as its only part. It is the obvious function of a children's code to lay down the law on child welfare. But this writing of provisions is really the crystallisation in a process that extends over a long period of time and involves all the experience of the race. As attention has been drawn more and more in recent years to the needs of children, the demand for a more simplified and effective legal procedure has taken form and out of this demand has grown the so-called children's code. This is a late development in the long history of work for children.

It may be said that it had its origin, if anything of so evolutionary a character can be conceded a definite origin, in England. Three acts of the British Parliament known as the Consolidated Factory Acts, the Consolidated Educational Acts, and the Children's Act of 1908, together with amendments adopted from time to time, constitute what is practically a code of laws for the benefit of children in the United Kingdom. The subject matter of the first and second of these acts is indicated by their titles; the third is wider in scope and divided into six parts devoted to (1) infant life protection; (2) prevention of cruelty to children and young persons; (3) juvenile smoking; (4) reformatory and industrial schools; (5) juvenile offenders; and (6) miscellaneous matters such as definitions, safety at entertainments, penalties for giving intoxicating liquor to children, etc. This Children's Act of 1908 was brought prominently to the attention of social workers in the United States both while it was pending in Parliament and after it became effective, and it was suggested that action be taken by the states of our own country looking toward the simplifying, standardising and co-ordinating of the provisions of law relating to children somewhat on the plan of the British Act.

Ohio was the first of our states to respond. Its legislature directed the governor to appoint "a commission to revise, consoli-

date and suggest amendments to the statute laws of the state of Ohio which pertain to children," and defined the powers and duties of this commission in part as follows: "In performing this duty such commissioners shall unify the present laws pertaining to illegitimate, defective, neglected, dependent and delinquent children, and to their treatment, care, maintenance, custody, control, protection and reformation; and shall suggest such amendments and additions as to them may seem best calculated to bring the law of this State into harmony with the best thought on this subject." The commission labored at its task for nearly two years and submitted to the governor and through him to the legislature in 1913, a comprehensive report with recommendations on institutions, state control of charities, juvenile courts, child-placing, compulsory education, child labor, apprenticeship, offenses against children, and widows' pensions. These recommendations were introduced into the legislature as one bill and, with some changes, were adopted that year.

New Hampshire followed suit and in 1913, her legislature authorised the governor and council to appoint "three suitable persons who shall investigate all matters relating to the welfare of the dependent, defective and delinquent children of the State, especiallv the questions of orphanage, juvenile courts, detention homes, desertion, physical and mental degeneracy, infant mortality, accidents and diseases, and make report, with recommendations concerning the above matters, to the legislature of 1915." The commission was duly appointed and a careful report was prepared and submitted but the recommendations failed of adoption.

Next, acting upon the suggestion of social workers and without special authority from the state legislature, the governor of Missouri appointed a commission and charged it with the revising and codifying of the laws concerning children in a report to be submitted to the legislature. Forty-two bills were drawn, covering pretty thoroughly the child welfare territory, but of these only ten were enacted. Here, the policy of introducing the measures as separate bills was followed instead of submitting all the recommendations in a body as was done in Ohio. The expenses incurred by the commission in the discharge of its duties were met by contributions from private sources, for of course no public funds had been made available through legislative appropriation for the purpose as had been done in Ohio and New Hampshire. The program of proposals

having been in large part rejected by the legislature in 1917, the governor ordered that the commission continue its work and accordingly a new and more detailed report was prepared by its thirty members and submitted to the legislature in 1919, together with bills to revise the statutes which were inconsistent or in conflict, to repeal obsolete or undesirable statutes, and to provide in some instances entirely new legislation. At this session the report fared better and most of the recommendations were approved.

In 1916, also upon request of welfare agencies and without special warrant of the legislature, owing to the failure of previous attempts to obtain such authorisation and inspired by the example of Missouri, the governor of Minnesota appointed 12 persons to serve as a commission "to revise and codify the laws of the State relating to children." The commission had only five months in which to work before the convening of the next legislature and therefore did not attempt to cover the entire body of laws pertaining to children, but gave its attention chiefly to the interests of the handicapped. Expenses were provided for in this case also, through the generosity of public-spirited citizens and societies. The report was submitted and referred to a joint committee of the two houses of the legislature on child welfare and the secretary of the commission was made clerk of this committee. Thirty-five of the forty-three bills prepared were favorably reported to the legislature by its joint committee and were passed with but slight alterations and with scarcely a dissenting voice.

At present, numerous state commissions are at work with the intention of reporting to their respective legislative assemblies in 1921.

VI

A children's code is a highly complex structure and yet its elements fall readily into clearly marked groups. First, there is that body of vital laws upon which any welfare program must be based and without which none can be complete, namely, those which may properly be listed under the heading:

Preservation of Life and Health

Included among the matters coming within this group are the segregation and possibly the sterilisation of the unfit to insure a

reduction in the birth rate of subnormal children; the issuance of marriage licenses only to those who are physically and mentally sound; freedom of women from toil for a suitable period both before and after confinement; birth and death registration; the licensing and supervision of midwives; prevention of blindness in infancy; medical and dental care not only of children in school, in institutions, and at work, but provision also for health centers and nursing service for the sake of children in general.

The second group of laws may be termed:

Protection From Want, Abuse and Crime

This group would include the care of dependent, neglected, and defective children; provisions concerning illegitimacy; protection from cruelty and premature toil; regulation of work hours and conditions of labor; correction and prevention of delinquency; establishment of juvenile courts and the probation system; fixing the age of consent; providing for relief of the poor; safeguarding of property rights; and protection from obscene publications, dangerous weapons, etc.

In a third and final group would be found provisions for the benefit of children generally under the heading:

Education and Recreation

Here we should list the establishment of a public school system with provisions for continuation schools, compulsory attendance and vocational education and guidance; social centers; parks and playgrounds; public baths; libraries; the supervision of commercial amusements.

The laws covering these three comprehensive fields are by no means independent of one another in their application, as might be inferred; indeed, their inter-relations are so intricate and extensive as to weave a veritable network which becomes apparent after only a brief study of them and particularly of their administration. Their various bearings are often confusing and give rise to puzzling questions as to the seat of administrative control; for instance, it has been for years and is still, a moot question whether medical inspection of school children is best regarded as a function of the

public health authorities or of the public school authorities. Such doubts and the different ways they have been resolved in practice have been in part responsible for the administrative chaos we sometimes find even in a restricted area of child welfare work. One would naturally look for a simple administrative arrangement in a single phase of one subdivision of one field, but even in so narrow a space the machinery is often amazingly complicated.

Take, for instance, street trading by children in New York City, which is one phase of the child labor subdivision of the general labor field—here one would expect to find direct and systematic control, but instead he comes upon a maze of varying restrictions and administrative agencies. A peddler must be at least 16 years of age, must have a license issued by the bureau of licenses at the City Hall, and is subject to oversight by the police; a bootblack in a shoe-polishing establishment must be at least 14 years of age, must have a permit issued by the board of health, may work only 8 hours a day and only between 8 A.M. and 6 P.M., and is subject to oversight by the mercantile inspectors attached to the state industrial commission; a bootblack who wanders about with his own kit of tools is subject to no restrictions whatever as to age or work hours, needs no permit of any kind, and no officer is assigned to look after him; a newsboy must be at least 12 years of age, must have a badge issued by the school attendance bureau, may work any number of hours between 6 A.M. and 8 P.M., and is watched by the school attendance officers. It would tax one's ingenuity to devise a more absurd administrative plan. And it should be remembered that it relates only to peddlers, bootblacks, and newsboys—children whose work is much alike and who move in the same environment—and yet to give them protection many different standards have been set up, and the departments of health, labor, schools, police and licenses are all called into action.

VII

The well-being of the children of a community may be fairly judged by its laws. They do not reflect public opinion, as a rule, but rather the public disposition. For the general public has no actual opinion in such matters and relies for its standards upon the judgment of those who specialise in the work. It is the public

disposition, the public attitude, toward children and their interests that determines the character of child welfare laws. These laws are the index of a community's status in the humanitarian aspects of our civilisation. They perform their function best where they have been developed out of local thought and experience, and have not been transplanted from elsewhere merely upon the assumption that what has been found useful in one place must needs be useful everywhere. They are of little value unless they are adapted to local conditions and are understood by the people they affect.

One of the best means of bringing about a clearer understanding of child welfare laws and a better appreciation of their purposes both on the part of the general public and on that of social workers themselves, is the so-called children's code. It attracts attention throughout a state while it is in course of preparation and again when pending in the legislature, and so helps to give the citizens a knowledge of their measures for child care and the agencies that administer them. And it brings home to these agencies and to all social workers the wholesome truth that each one is only part of a great movement and must fit himself into that movement wherever he belongs and work with the rest in the common effort to advance. Social workers are not distinguished for co-operation among themselves—they usually pursue their own ends independently of others, even of those engaged in closely related work, and seem utterly indifferent to the constant opportunity for joint endeavor. This aloofness among the workers has been one of the factors in the random growth of our social welfare laws, for each little group has strived to embody its own ideas in their provisions regardless of their bearing upon other parts of the general program, and has jealously guarded its legislative achievements as something peculiarly its own, they have forgotten for a time that what is sought is not the development of their own little part alone, but the complete welfare of every child. It may be that this attitude is due to a failure to keep steadily in mind the principles upon which the work is based, for an understanding of principles can not but broaden one's outlook and lead to a recognition of what others are trying to do in related fields. The children's code brings us all up with a sharp turn and forces us to see our tasks not as individual enterprises but as so many parts of a great structure. In the states where codes have been attempted, one of the conspicuous features of the

campaigns has been the bringing together of the representatives of different types of service some of these meeting their fellow workers for the first time, for whenever a code is proposed all branches are at once aroused, because they know their own work will be more or less reviewed and adjusted. A code is, in one sense, a deliberate effort to promote co-operation and unity of action among all public and private agencies.

The proceedings of conferences on social work yield a wealth of illustrative material but very few statements of principles. It is natural for one to discuss a subject in terms of his own experience in dealing with it, and to tell what he has encountered and what he has done—the pages of reports and addresses are full of such illustrations—but valuable as this descriptive matter is, it is not so valuable as a laying down of the basis for such procedure, a setting forth of the principles underlying it. Practice without theory does not make for orderly progress. Our work can be measured by its results, it is true, but back of that work and its results are certain principles, and these principles are in all cases the guide to success. What are the principles upon which a children's code rests? These are fairly apparent from what has gone before, but may be stated more succinctly as follows:

1. In order to insure sound manhood and womanhood, every child must enjoy the fullest possible measure of care and nurture through the properly co-ordinated functions of the home and the state.

2. Every effort for child welfare is part of a whole. The whole is the sum of all such efforts and is designed to guarantee the complete care and nurture of every child.

3. The several parts of the whole must be so shaped and adjusted that each will perform its own function fully and freely and at the same time in harmony with all the others in the approach toward the common goal.

VIII

Any plans looking toward the framing of a code should include a careful study of conditions throughout the state so that all the aspects of child welfare, whether peculiar to the one state or common

to all, may be given full consideration. In all cases, so far, the children's code commissions have been instructed to submit their reports to their state legislatures at the sessions next ensuing, and this has hastened their work and necessarily made it incomplete. They have studied the laws of other states, have consulted specialists in the various fields, have compiled the acts in force, have recommended new legislation, have suggested amendments to the old, and have prepared reports and able discussions of the matter submitted, but inasmuch as the members of such commissions have been able to devote to the task only such time as they could spare from their regular work, it has not received the attention necessary for thoroughness in an undertaking of such magnitude and importance. Again, the commissioners have nearly all been selected from among the residents of larger cities and because of their familiarity with urban conditions and comparative ignorance of rural conditions, there is noticeable in their reports a disproportionate emphasis upon the needs of city children and the implied assumption that what is good for the city child is necessarily good for the country child too. A children's code is so far-reaching in its effects that haste in its preparation should be avoided and sufficient time allowed to make possible a complete presentation of children's needs. Another advantage of the thorough method is that it enables the public as well as the agencies immediately concerned, to become better informed as to the code's purposes and provisions. The National Child Labor Committee has been active in the children's code movement since its inception in Ohio and holds that the first step to be taken in such work is to make a comprehensive study of conditions so that in the light of the knowledge so gained, substantial progress toward the end sought may be more certainly achieved. It has for several years past placed at the disposal of states contemplating the adoption of codes, its staff of specialists in child health, schools, labor, recreation, rural life, juvenile courts, law and administration, and exhaustive reports of conditions have been drawn up together with constructive state child welfare programs which have been published and widely used in the development of legislative provisions and administrative systems.

Dr. Hastings H. Hart of the Russell Sage Foundation also has lent his aid in behalf of children's codes where they have been

under consideration as well as where the movement had entered upon its initial stage.

The work is being prosecuted with the idea that the welfare of the child is the true emblem of our democracy and that only as child welfare is advanced can our democracy flourish.

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STATE CHILD WELFARE STUDIES.

The National Child Labor Committee has at the request of various state and local agencies made State Child Welfare Studies. These studies cover such subjects as Public Health, Education, Dependency, Juvenile Delinquency, Institutions, Recreation, Child Labor, Agriculture, Rural Life, and Law and Administration. They are designed to show existing conditions, to further co-operation in the different fields of children's work and to offer suggestions for remedial and preventive effort. They are constructive in spirit, and practical use is being made of them in the standardising and co-ordinating of laws, and in improving administrative machinery and methods.

CHILD WELFARE IN OKLAHOMA. 75 Cents.

The Oklahoma survey was made by the Committee's staff of specialists at the invitation of the University of Oklahoma and was conducted by Edward N. Clopper, Ph.D. Of the published volume the *American Economic Review* says:

"The interesting feature of the report is that it proves, intrinsically, the fact that there can not be merely one point of view concerning anything that concerns child welfare. . . . Public health, delinquency, the institutional care of children, are all interdependent fields of work, bound up with the questions of recreation, mothers' pensions, and poor relief. A valuable work has been performed in relating these problems and in clearing the way for the further and more effective standardization of child welfare laws."

CHILD WELFARE IN ALABAMA. $1.00.

The University of Alabama cooperated with the National Child Labor Committee in making this survey, which was directed by Dr. Clopper.

"It is a very exhaustive report and is full of interest from beginning to end."—*Birmingham Age-Herald.*

CHILD WELFARE IN NORTH CAROLINA. $1.00.

This survey was made for the North Carolina Conference for Social Service, under the direction of W. H. Swift.

"The volume forms part of a nation-wide movement. . . . It should form a good basis for action in North Carolina, beside throwing light on the remedy for much ineffectiveness in law-making that is not, unfortunately, peculiar to that State."—*The Nation.*

According to *The Survey*, "This study of North Carolina . . . is perhaps the most telling of them all, because it deals more in specific instances and less in generalities."

CHILD WELFARE IN KENTUCKY. $1.25.

This study was made under the direction of Edward N. Clopper, Ph.D., and was an inquiry by the National Child Labor Committee for the Kentucky Child Labor Association and the State Board of Health.

"Child Welfare in Kentucky . . . presents a thoroughly modern and progressive view applicable to all communities that have the interests of children at heart."—*Boston Transcript.*

The National Child Labor Committee has undertaken to make a study of **Child Welfare in Tennessee** at the invitation of Governor Roberts, the five state departments of health, labor, schools, charities, and agriculture; the University of Tennessee, the Anti-Tuberculosis Association, the Associated Charities of several cities, and other agencies. The report will embrace the subjects of health, schools, child labor, juvenile courts, institutions, rural life, recreation and laws and administration.

These volumes should be in every library containing works on sociology and economics. They are of special value to social workers, clergymen, educators, journalists, legislators and administrators everywhere.

HAS YOUR STATE HAD A CHILD WELFARE SURVEY?

National Child Labor Committee

Incorporated to Promote the Interests of Children

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